

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 169 052

SP 014 123

AUTHOR Brictson, Paula
TITLE An Analysis of State Supported Teachers' Centers.
Research on Establishing Teachers' Centers: Four Perspectives.
PUB DATE Apr 79
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting (San Francisco, California, April 1979)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Financial Support; *Governance; *Inservice Teacher Education; Needs Assessment; Program Evaluation; *Staff Improvement; State Aid; *State Programs; *Teacher Centers

ABSTRACT

Changing curriculum, shifting student populations, and technological and societal demands require that school staff remain actively and continuously involved in staff development programs; because of these issues and the new mandated programs, more stable teaching workforce, and numerous and varied programs in Michigan, the Michigan Department of Education initiated measures to bring about a better coordinated stated effort in staff development projects. Components of the Michigan plan include: (1) a network of 20 to 22 professional development centers; (2) governing boards made up of no less than 50 percent classroom teachers; (3) needs assessment procedures for each center; and (4) center evaluation by the state. Components are illustrated in descriptions of four specific teacher centers. (DS)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED169052

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

RESEARCH ON ESTABLISHING TEACHERS' CENTERS: FOUR PERSPECTIVES

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Paula Brictson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

"AN ANALYSIS OF STATE SUPPORTED TEACHERS' CENTERS"

Paula Brictson
Michigan Department of Education

Presented at American Educational Research Association
San Francisco, California
April, 1979

Session 4.13

SP014123

"An Analysis of State Supported Teachers' Centers"
Paula Brictson, Michigan Department of Education

Introduction

During the past 25 years new teaching demands have accumulated at a very rapid rate, many of them stimulated by federal support for new programs. There is a need to establish an orderly means by which new knowledge and new teaching strategies become diffused throughout Michigan school systems.

Michigan Department of Education records indicate that most provisional certificate holders complete requirements for a continuing teaching certificate four to six years after graduation from college. Of the approximately 109,000 professional personnel employed in Michigan schools, 75% hold a permanent or continuing certificate and have completed all necessary requirements beyond the Bachelor's degree. A similarly high percentage are near the top of the local district salary schedule. Therefore, with declining enrollments and provisions in most master contracts for layoffs to be made on a seniority basis, it is predicted that professional staff will include more persons: 1) with extended experience, 2) at the maximum salary and 3) with higher levels of college or university preparation. The average age of female teachers in Michigan is 39 with 10 years of teaching experience, and the average age of male teachers is 38 with 11 years of teaching experience.

Many programs in Michigan are identified as providing opportunities for staff development. They include graduate level college programs related to certification requirements or advanced degrees, local and intermediate school district professional development activities, and state and federal categorically funded staff development activities for specific programs.

There is a need for a better coordination of these activities to link the available resources with staff development needs identified at the district, building and classroom level. Changing curriculum, shifting student populations, technological and societal demands require that school staff remain actively and continuously involved in staff development programs. Local school staff involvement in decision-making for staff development is an essential component to provide both improved training and increased commitment.

Because of these issues; new mandated programs, a more stable teaching workforce, and the numerous and varied staff development programs within the state, the Michigan Department of Education, supported by the Legislature and Governor, initiated measures to bring about a better coordinated state effort in staff development projects.

Michigan State-Funded Professional Development Centers

Staff development has been defined in Michigan as a planned and organized effort to: (1) provide teachers and other educational workers with knowledge and skills to facilitate improved student learning and performance commensurate with student incentive and potential, (2) meet additional developmental needs of students, and (3) meet the specific needs of staff that may or may not be related to cognitive outcomes.

Thus, in Michigan, the professional development center is viewed as a means for teachers and other educational workers; paraprofessionals, administrators, counselors and others involved with the educational experience of students, to plan for and participate in meaningful staff development activities. Moreover, the center in Michigan is conceived as a system to provide inservice for school staff which can enhance the performance of students in classrooms.

Such centers provide a means of responding - on a regional basis - to locally identified areas of need. Second, centers provide professional development services which can assist in providing training in areas of broad need as seen from the state-wide perspective of the state educational agency. Such state-wide needs might be in bilingual education, career education, or the mainstreaming of handicapped students - all of which have recently been mandated by the state legislature.

Flexibility and extensive and meaningful teacher involvement are key factors in a professional development center - as well as the use of such resources as: (1) top notch teachers sharing strategies and techniques with one another; (2) specialists from local and intermediate school district staffs; (3) personnel from colleges of education; (4) exemplary programs and practices developed in local educational agencies, identified and supported by the State Board of Education.

Components of Michigan Centers

1. Eligible Recipients for Funding

Within Michigan there are 530 K-12 public school districts. In addition there are 58 intermediate school districts organized, for the most part, on county line boundaries. Traditionally these intermediate school districts have been involved with providing inservice programs to local school districts, particularly in the area of special education.

The Michigan plan, as originally conceived, called for an eventual network of 20 to 22 professional development centers. Centers would be at the intermediate school district or consortia of intermediate school districts. The only exception is a first class school district; Detroit Public Schools is the only first class school district. Centers have been

funded through a competitive response to state requests for proposals. State Board of Education action later revised eligibility to include a school district with a minimum of 750 professional personnel or a consortium of school districts with a total of 750 professional personnel. However, at present there are no state funded centers operating under this latter eligibility criterion.

2. Governance

No less than 50% of the members of the governing board are representative of classroom teachers who are participants in the center activities. Other appropriate representation includes local and intermediate school districts, education associations, professional development advisory councils and institutions of higher education. The governing board is involved with all levels of planning, implementation and evaluation of center program.

3. Needs Assessment

Each center has developed a needs assessment procedure, usually paper-pencil inventories initially to identify areas for program planning. Center staff have been able to develop and implement building level procedures to ascertain needs of specific buildings and individual teachers. All centers respond to individual consultation requests from teachers.

4. Evaluation

Because the funding for the three state-funded centers is an annual appropriation, the role of the state legislature is critical and influences the center activities, especially relative to evaluation of the centers and impact on student performance. This means that the centers are obligated, to assure yearly appropriation, to engage in activities which can provide data to the State Board, Legislature and Governor which show some gain in the academic growth of students. As a consequence, all three state-funded centers

have special building projects to utilize the building as a unit of analysis. In addition, all three centers keep extensive records of teacher participation in center activities, teacher perceptions of the value of workshops and teacher perceptions of the degree of implementation and follow-up in the classroom.

This raises an interesting issue for centers and staff development activities which are dependent upon allocation of state funds, particularly in a time of fiscal austerity. It behooves individuals and groups involved in centering efforts to mount an effort to educate legislators and other policy makers on appropriate evaluation methodologies, indicants of effectiveness and timelines for evaluation. Central to the notion of evaluation of teacher centers is the role and involvement of teachers in designing evaluation schemes.

Three state-funded professional development centers are in operation in Michigan at this time. Excerpts from the three Executive Summaries follow.

The Detroit Center for Professional Growth and Development

The Detroit Center for Professional Growth and Development, operating since 1976, is the first state-supported professional development center in Michigan. Its establishment represented a major commitment by the Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education and the State Legislature to support the plan of key educational leaders in the Detroit community for pioneering new directions for the inservice education of school personnel.

The principal assumption underlying the activities of the Detroit Center is that one effective way to reverse the downward trend in student learning is to provide professional development opportunities for all staff involved in the teaching/learning process. Therefore, Center activities are designed to increase the skills and knowledge of education personnel in

meeting the learning needs of students.

Center services are available to all Detroit educators: 9,698 teachers, 1,311 administrators and supervisors, and 3,086 paraprofessionals. There are approximately 218,404 students in the Detroit system.

Funding and Location

Resources for the Detroit Center are derived from four sources:

1. State appropriation - \$450,000
2. Wayne State University - cost-free contributions of five rooms for office space, furniture, custodial services, utilities, and use of rooms in the Student Center Building as needed
3. Detroit Public Schools - one Inservice Specialist provided without cost to the Center since September 5, 1978
4. The Detroit Federation of Teachers - provides space for selected workshops and regularly published notices of Center activities in its paper, The Detroit Teacher.

The University served as the fiscal agent from 1975-78. Beginning in 1978-79, the Detroit Public School System became the agent.

Center offices are housed in the College of Education, Wayne State University. However, activities are held throughout the district, in schools and offices that are convenient to Detroit staff members.

Governance Structure

The Detroit Center has two governing/advisory mechanisms:

1. The Governance Board consists of five members and five alternate representatives of the governing organizations - the Detroit Public Schools, the Wayne State University College of Education, the Detroit Federation of

Teachers, the Organization of School Administrators and Supervisors, and the Wayne County Intermediate School District. The Governance Board, with input from five advisory committees, has responsibility for establishing Center policies and directions. A representative from the Michigan Department of Education serves as an ex-officio member of the Board.

2. Five advisory committees - for Mathematics, Reading, Paraprofessionals, Evaluation and overall Center activities - help determine Center programs and make recommendations to the Governance Board. Membership on these committees includes representatives of teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and citizens from these twenty-two educational organizations in southeastern Michigan:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. Detroit Central Board of Education | l. Merrill-Palmer Institute |
| b. Detroit Chapter, P.T.A. | m. M.A.S.C.D. |
| c. Det. Fed. of Paraprofessionals | n. Michigan State University |
| d. Det. Fed. of Teachers | o. Oakland University |
| e. Org. of School Adm. and Sup. | p. State Department of Education |
| f. Detroit Region Superintendents | q. The University of Detroit |
| g. Eastern Michigan University | r. The University of Michigan |
| h. Macomb County I.S.D. | s. Wayne County Community College |
| i. Madonna College | t. Wayne County Curriculum Directors |
| j. Marygrove College | u. Wayne County I.S.D. |
| k. Mercy College | v. Wayne State University |

The Detroit Center Delivery System

Four Center components constitute the delivery system through which the Center responds to inservice training requests from Detroit Schools. Two are "outreach" components, Field Consultant Services and Special Project Schools. Through these, all school may be provided services. Two are "support" components, the Reading and Mathematics Resource Centers and Evaluation and Research. The support components provide specialized, indepth resources, information, and knowledge which are crucial to the outreach components and to the Center administration.

The Kent Professional Development Center

History and Development

The Kent Intermediate School District (KISD), located in southwestern Michigan, is representative of the demographic diversity existing in the state. KISD serves twenty public school districts and seventy non-public schools involving six thousand educators.

With the current surplus of teachers and the small turnover rate, a majority of teachers in the KISD service area are at the top of their salary schedules and have permanent certification. Thus, the incentives (such as moving up the pay scale or receiving permanent certification) for taking traditional university courses no longer apply. In order to attract teachers, inservice must have direct applicability to classroom practice and must be convenient and readily accessible to teachers.

The Kent Intermediate School District established a Professional Development Center Design Committee during the 1975-1976 school year due to interest in the Teacher Center movement. The Design Committee included representatives from teacher groups, administrators, colleges, universities, and the Kent Intermediate School District. This committee reached consensus on a model for a proposed Kent Professional Development Center (KPDC) in May, 1976. The model was disseminated to these groups and organizations for the purpose of creating an awareness of the model and seeking input.

The reactions to the model was overwhelmingly positive. Letters of support and offers of cooperation were received from colleges and universities, local school districts, the Grand Rapids Catholic and Christian Schools Associations, and the Kent County Coordinating Council of the Michigan Education Association.

These reactions provided support for writing the Kent Professional Development Center Planning Grant Proposal, which was submitted to the

Michigan Department of Education on November 10, 1976.

Kent Intermediate School District was awarded one of the four planning grants of \$12,500 by the Michigan Department of Education in January, 1977.

Kent Professional Development Advisory Council, university representatives from the nine college and universities that serve the area, and the KISD staff designed the Kent Professional Development Center Proposal which was submitted to the Michigan Department of Education on June 1, 1977.

The State Board of Education approved the proposal and recommended that \$100,000 be awarded, subject to legislative appropriation, for the grant period October 1, 1977, through September 30, 1978.

Governing Board

The Governing Board consists of ten voting and two ex-officio members. The voting members are five teachers representing the Michigan Education Association Region 9 A-B-C-D Coordinating Councils and five administrators representing elementary principals, middle school principals, high school principals, curriculum personnel, and KISD superintendents. The two non-voting members represent the colleges and universities in the KISD area and the KISD Board of Education. The functions of the Governing Board are as follows:

1. Establish KPDC policies and bylaws to include processes for amending its own procedures and membership;
2. Hire and evaluate KPDC Director;
3. Approve hiring and evaluation of additional KPDC staff;
4. Approve budgets and expenditures;
5. Approve programs recommended by the Kent Advisory Council on Professional Development and establish priorities for their implementation;

6. Accept, reject, or amend recommendations from KPDC staff and Professional Development Advisory Council;
7. Approve Program Design Committees to assist Center staff in the design, implementation and evaluation of programs;
8. Approve information about the KPDC for dissemination.

Advisory Council

In December of 1976, teacher groups, administrative groups, colleges of education, school boards and the general citizenry selected representatives to serve on the Kent Professional Development Advisory Council. These thirty members:

1. Assist in establishing Building Level Advisory Committees;
2. Arrange training for members of Building Level Advisory Committees in the identification of student and teacher needs;
3. Analyze needs assessment data and identify critical areas of need;
4. Recommend programs to the Governing Board, based on identified needs;
5. Assist in the identification of possible professional development resources;
6. Analyze and coordinate local and Intermediate School District professional development activities;
7. Provide communication link with the Governing Board, Program Design Committees, Center Staff, Building Level Advisory Committees, and all constituencies represented on the Council;
8. Maintain communication linkage with the State Department of Education, Internal Council on Professional Development.

Building Level Advisory Committees

Ninety-five percent of the buildings in the KISD service area have established Building Level Advisory Committees. The purpose of these Committees is to set up a two-way communication linkage from the building through the system to the KPDC. These committees:

1. Work with building staff to identify teacher and student needs;
2. Establish top priorities for each building;
3. Disseminate information about KPDC to building staff;
4. Work with Program Design teams to plan, implement, and evaluate programs;
5. Provide input to the Kent Professional Development Advisory Council relative to needs, programs, professional development resources, and general KPDC operations from their perspectives.

Region 12 Professional Development Center

The Region 12 Professional Development Center is a program serving 6,000 educators in Barry Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties in southwestern Michigan. The Center is housed at the Kalamazoo Valley Intermediate School District Service Center and utilizes the Intermediate School District offices in each county as Satellite Centers. Funded by the Michigan Department of Education as well as local support, the Center has the primary purpose of providing inservice programs to improve school staff competencies and skills related to the delivery of educational services to students in 39 local school districts.

The Governance Structure

The Region 12 Professional Development Center is governed by a region-wide Governance Council comprised of eighteen teachers and administrators. The

Governance Council has as its role to: 1) formulate Center operational policy and 2) plan and coordinate the implementation and evaluation of programs conducted by the Center.

Teachers and administrators guide Center activities through responding to needs assessment surveys and feedback to the Center based on individual participation in Center-sponsored programs.

Financial Support for the Center

State appropriation - \$100,000

Local & Regional - \$ 45,000

Northwest Staff Development Center

Michigan has one federally funded teacher center - the Northwest Staff Development Center which is a consortium of seven districts, 3,600 teachers, in southeastern Michigan.

The Northwest Staff Development Council was established in May, 1976. The impetus for developing a staff development council came from the felt need of teachers and administrators in the seven school districts. The need was evidenced by the negligible hiring of new teachers and the increase in the average years teaching experience of staff members. New approaches and the expansion and updating of skills for maturing staff was a defined need. In addition, frequent requests from teachers to provide experiences were not met because of limited range of available alternatives. Student assessment results indicated a need to upgrade the quality of education through inservice programming implementing cooperative strategies.

This center has been in operation since October, 1978, with programs based on individual teacher, school and district need. Teacher mini-grants have been offered based on small proposals submitted to the Center policy board.

The establishment of three state-funded professional development centers and the one federally funded teacher center has increased awareness and contributed to expertise of educators throughout the state relative to staff development activities. There are approximately 40 Professional Development Advisory Councils operating in Michigan on a volunteer basis to assess educator needs and identify resources. Key to the success of these councils has been the experience of the centers. Local and intermediate school districts are encouraged and assisted by the state agency to engage in "centering" activities through local utilization and coordination of funds.